

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

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E.O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, AR (VICENTE SOLANO LIMA)

SUBJECT: SPECULATION CONCERNING SOLANO LIMA'S SITUATION

1. SUMMARY. SPECULATION CONTINUES THAT SOLANO LIMA MAY BE ON WAY OUT AS SEC GEN PRESIDENCY. SOURCES CLOSE TO HIM DENY IT, AND ATTRIBUTE SPECULATION TO ARCH RIVAL ECONMIN GELBARD. END SUMMARY

2. THE PRESS HAS CONTINUED TO REPORT RUMORS TO THE EFFECT THAT SOLANO LIMA WILL SHORTLY RESIGN. ONE REPORTED RUMOR IS THAT HE WILL BE APPOINTED AMBASSADOR TO BRAZIL IN ORDSF TKSGET HIM OUT OF THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENCY. LA OPINION HAS BEEN THE MOST VIGOROUS IN PUSHING THIS SPECULATION CONCERNING SOLANO LIMA'S FUTURE AND IN THE WAKE OF THE AZUL TERRORIST ATTACK HAS SUGGESTED THAT LIMA HAS BEEN SOFT ON TERRORISM AND TOWARDS A NUMBER OF LEFTIST GOVERNORS.

3. LA OPINION'S OWNER ISU VERY CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF ECONMIN VZBARD AND THE PAPER IS USUALLY CONSIDERED AN OUTLET FOR THE LATTER. GIVEN THE RIVALRY BETWEEN GELBARD AND LIMA, IT SEEMS MOST LIKELY THAT LA OPINION'S SUGGESTION THAT LIMA IS ON THE WAY OUT BECAUSE HE HAS BEEN SOFT ON TERRORISM IS DESIGNED TO CREATE PRECISELY THAT IMAGE OF HIM. IT IS THEREFORE MORE AN EFFORT TO GET HIM OUT THAN A REFLECTION OF HIS REAL SITUATION.

4. EMBOFF INFORMED BY SOURCE VERY CLOSE TO LIMA THAT LATTER'S
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RELATIONS WITH GELBARD AND LOPEZ REGA HAVE NOW REACHED SUCH

BITTER STAGE THAT HE NO LONGER SPEAKS TO THEM, OR THEY TO HIM. SOURCE WENT ON TO DENY CATEGORICALLY, HOWEVER, RUMORS THAT LIMA INTENDS TO RESIGN OR THAT HE MAY BE FORCED OUT. LIMA'S POWER STRUGGLE WITH GELBARD AND LOPEZ REGA WAS GIVEN FACT, SOURCE WENT ON, BUT THERE NO TRUTH TO SUGGESTION THAT LIMA HAD LOST PERON'S FAVOR. LIMA, FOR GOOD REASONS, HAD NOT BEEN PRESENT DURING PERON'S JAN 20 SPEECH, BUT AT MEETING NEXT DAY PERON HAD POINTEDLY FAVORED LIMA WITH PLACE OF HONOR. "SO LONG AS PERON IS INTERESTED IN DIALOGUE WITH OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES, HE WILL VALUE LIMA'S SERVICES," SOURCE CONCLUDED.

5. COMMENT. SOURCE IS HARDLY AN OBJECTIVE TOO ONE. FURTHER, LIMA

IS INDEED AT DISADVANTAGE SINCE GELBARD-LOPEZ REGA CAMP ALSO INCLUDES ISABEL DE PERON AND EX-PRESIDENT RAUL LASTIRI. HIS ONE STRENGTH, HAS BEEN HIS ACCEPTABILITY AND EXCELLENT ENTREES TO OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES. PERON HAS GIVEN PRIORITY ATTENTION TO MAINTAINING GOOD RELATIONS WITH THOSE PARTIES AND APPEARS TO REMAIN COMMITTED TO DIALOGUE WITH THEM. IT IS ENTIRELY POSSIBLE THAT LIMA MAY BE ON WAY OUT. HOWEVER, SINCE MOST OF THE SPECULATION THAT HE IS STEMS FROM HIS POLITICAL ENEMIES, AND SINCE THERE ARE PERSUASIVE REASONS TO BELIEVE HE IS STILL USEFUL TO PERON, EMBASSY INCLINED TO BELIEVE HE MAY BE AROUND YET AWHILE.
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